Nevada Common Core Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 27, 2013

Nevada System of Higher Education Office (NSHE), Reno, Nevada with video conference to NSHE Las Vegas, Nevada

Committee Members Present:

- Chancellor Daniel Klaich Reno
- Superintendent Dale Erquiaga Reno
- Senator Aaron Ford Las Vegas
- Ms. Punam Mathur Las Vegas
- Ms. Suhaila Mustafa Las Vegas
- Mr. Jim Pfrommer Reno
- Dr. Chelli Smith Las Vegas
- Dr. Bill Speer Reno
- Mr. Adam Whatley Reno
- Dr. Steve Canavero Reno
- Mr. Jeff Zander Reno
- Ms. Amy Henderson Reno

Leadership/Staff Members Present:

- Ms. Rorie Fitzpatrick Reno
- Mr. Dave Brancamp- Reno
- Ms. Crystal Abba Reno
- Ms. Allison Combs- Reno
- Ms. Christine Hull-Reno
- Ms. Judy Osgood Reno
- Ms. Audra Blackwell Reno

Members Absent/Excused: All Members Present

Audience in Attendance:

- Dr. Ken Coll UNR
- Tom Reagan Great Basin College
- Dr. Pam Salazar Chair of the Teachers and Leaders Council
- Glenn Meyer NV Department of Education, IT Manager
- Kirsten Gleissner NWRPDP
- Sarah Negrete NNRPDP
- Gregory Brown –UNLV
- Jacob Silverstein Nevada Succeeds

Call to Order:

Superintendent Erquiaga called the meeting to order at 9:33am, with Roll Call taken and all committee members in attendance as reflected above.

Public Comment:

Superintendent Erquiaga opened the floor for public comment; there was no public comment in Las Vegas or Reno.

Approval of August 26, 2013 Meeting Minutes:

The Committee requested corrections to name and title spellings to be made to Senator Aaron Ford, Dr. Chelli Smith, and Dr. William Speer. With these corrections the minutes were approved – Motion to approve with corrections by Punam Mathur and seconded by Jim Pfrommer.

Call for Flexible Agenda:

The motion to approve flexible agenda was made by Steve Canavero and seconded by Punam Mathur. Motion approved.

Overview of AB 288 / General Assessments:

Ms. Rorie Fitzpatrick, Deputy Superintendent, gave a presentation and then discussion was held regarding the End of Course exams. Superintendent Erquiaga commented that the State Board of Education has to approve a minimum of four subject exams that must be passed including the standards in Common Core English language arts and math in the identified grade level. He stated that the Board of Education has great latitude in the bill. The State Board of Education can form subcommittees to make recommendations to the board for final decision. Superintendent Erquiaga also commented that the State Board of Education will not decide vendors for End of Course exams.

Ms. Mustafa asked about students with disabilities getting regular diplomas. Ms. Fitzpatrick responded that if students don't participate in College and Career Readiness or End of Course exams then no regular diploma may be given. She also commented that translation support was not addressed in the bill's language and that special consideration to disabilities and second language learners must be contemplated.

Superintendent Erquiaga asked the committee to think about what needs to occur on standards and what recommendations does the group want to make to the Governor and State Board of Education.

Teacher Preparation:

Ms. Abba spoke about the measure of quality in Nevada System of Higher Education programs. She gave introductions of Dr. Ken Coll of UNR and Tom Reagan of Great Basin College.

Dr. Coll and Mr. Reagan gave a presentation called "Nevada Teacher Education: Preparing Teachers and Other School Personnel in Common Core". The group had a discussion about how many teachers are in the NSHE Education Programs. Dr. Coll commented that there are about 200 licensable teachers, administrators and counselors in a 2 year typical pipeline. Mr. Reagan commented that Great Basin College serves rural areas about 20 per year in rural counties. Mr. Brown commented that UNLV has approximately 1,436 enrolled in the education program. Superintendent Erquiaga commented there are currently about 22,000-23,000 licensed teachers statewide.

Superintendent Erquiaga— called for a break at 11:07am and reconvened at 11:21am.

TLC/Educator Effectiveness:

Ms. Fitzpatrick, Deputy Superintendent, and Pam Salazar, Chair of Teachers and Leaders Council, gave a presentation called "Nevada Educator Performance Framework: A System for Highly Effective Instruction and Leadership". The committee had a discussion on educator performance and professional development. Ms. Fitzpatrick commented that in the last legislative session the legislature approved Governor Sandoval's budget that includes funding for professional development.

Ms. Fitzpatrick commented that in school year 2014-15 every teacher and administrator will be engaged with full assessment components. The Department of Education has to make a report to the Interim Finance Committee (IFC) on the success of the validation study data. Then IFC could make recommendations to 2015 Legislative Session that additional resources are needed and to continue validation study for another year.

The committee had a discussion on the assessments being harder for the children. Dr. Salazar commented that the transition has to be the point of conversations in Teachers and Leaders Council and in this group.

The committee did not break for lunch; NSHE provided lunch that was brought in.

Educational Technology Capabilities:

Glenn Meyer, Department of Education, gave a verbal presentation about information technology capabilities. He said that there was a needs assessment completed by the Raggio Center at UNR in 2012 and the following needs were identified: 1) more bandwidth; 2) replacement of existing infrastructure, hubs, routers, and wiring need upgrading; 3) more devices for testing at schools and/or home.

The Department of Education is partnering with Education Super Highway to conduct speed tests to determine the bandwidth speed all the way down to the desktop to measure the speed of the systems along with way. October 1st the test will be available to every school in every district. The company will provide feedback to the schools and districts so they can be aware of the replacement/upgrades needed at which locations. The committee had a discussion on bandwidth and school district readiness for testing. The bandwidth data will not be complete until after the testing during the month of October. The minimum computer requirements have been published and Windows XP is still compatible for SBAC testing.

Every spring the Department of Education conducts a survey of what problems each school district is having. The Information Technology office will be ready for testing by 2015.

The Committee also discussed the 1 to 1 pilot projects that several school districts have done to put a device with each student in target schools. Superintendent Erquiaga commented that the 1 to 1 is not required for testing. There are computer labs that students could take the tests in and there may be a need for more computer labs at some schools.

Mr. Meyer commented that the state donates several hundred computers a year and perhaps these could be filtered down into the schools that need devices. He said that most of the devices are five years old, but they are SBAC testing suitable.

Communications Update:

Judy Osgood, Department of Education, gave a presentation on Communications. Crystal Abba suggested a joint message with Superintendent Erquiaga and Chancellor Klaich showing that higher education is also involved with common core standards and supports it. Jim Pfrommer suggested engaging with economic development authorities in messaging.

Amy Henderson commented that the Kentucky PTA has done a great messaging job working with parents at town hall meetings.

Appointment of Subject Matter Leads for Communications, High School Seniors Transition, and Professional Development:

Superintendent Erquiaga requested three committee members to serve as subject matter leads and said that NSHE and NDE will provide support: Punam Mathur - Communications subject lead; Jeff Zander – K-12 Transition subject lead; and Chelli Smith – Professional Development subject lead. Superintendent Erquiaga and Chancellor Klaich will assign staff to the leads.

Next Steps / Future Meetings and Agenda Items:

Parental involvement and family engagement are agenda items for next meeting. Superintendent Erquiaga requested Ms. Henderson's assistance in crafting that agenda item.

Instructional support is another agenda item, to include text books and resources discussion.

Public Comment:

Superintendent Erquiaga opened the meeting up to public comment. Jacob Silverstein, Nevada Succeeds, commented on the need to get the business community on board with engaging in this process and do in a collaborative way. He also commented that Zappos and other businesses get rid of computers all the time. Mr. Silverstein asked if there has been any engaging of the business community yet. Superintendent Erquiaga replied that Mr. Silverstein had just started the conversation and put an idea on the committee's list for work session. Superintendent Erquiaga reminded the committee that it has a specific charge of reporting to the Governor by December 31, 2013.

Senator Ford commented that the communications plan could include engaging businesses.

Adjournment:

Superintendent Erquiaga adjourned the meeting at 1:26pm.

MINUTES COMPLETED BY AUDRA BLACKWELL, NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION